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February 7, 2008

Hon. Naomi Reice Buchwald  
Daniel P. Moynihan Courthouse, Room 2270  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007-1312

*Re: Christopher M. Colombo*

Dear Judge Buchwald:

I have known Mr. Colombo for approximately ten years. Mr. Colombo is a long time resident of Orange County. Our office provided him with representation in connection with a Matrimonial/Family Court matter which arose after his indictment in the Southern District of New York. I have been asked to confirm the difficulties occasioned by his house arrest and bail status. Mr. Colombo's children were literally kidnaped by Mr. Colombo's wife during his bail term as a means of estranging Mr. Colombo from his children. Mr. Colombo fought tirelessly to recover custody and did, in fact, succeed in the Orange County Family Court to return his children from Toms River, New Jersey and into his care. Mr. Colombo is an extremely devoted father to his children Katrina, now 9 years old, and Joseph, now 5 years old, who were 7 and 3, respectively, at the time of the incident. Following an award of custody to Mr. Colombo, based in part upon Mr. Colombo's bail status, his wife moved to modify custody and again estrange him from his children. The entire proceeding was very traumatic to Mr. Colombo and to the children. Mrs. Colombo relied in great part upon the U.S. Attorney's Offices unsupported allegations concerning Mr. Colombo's character. He therefore suffered uniquely during his pre-trial term. The Court appointed Law Guardian, Michelle Stevenson, also endorsed custody be awarded to Mr. Colombo as being in the best interest of his children. The matter was thereafter resolved with shared custody between the parents, which was approved by Orange County Family Court Judge, Debra Kiedasch. To his credit, Mr. Colombo fully supported his children's connection with their mother and arranged housing so that the children could travel freely from his household to his wife's located within several hundred yards of each other. Given the totality of circumstances, I believe consideration should be given in fashioning Mr. Colombo's sentence to the unique hardships imposed upon him during his bail term.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Benjamin Ostrer

BO/jdb

cc: A.U.S.A. Lisa Baroni

Jeremy Schneider